



USCGD *Paulding*

(CG-17)



Builder: Bath Iron Works, Bath, ME

Commissioned (USN): 29 Sep 1910

Acquired (CG): 28Apr 1924

Commissioned (CG): 23 Jan 1925

Decommissioned: 12 Aug 1930

Displacement: 742 tons

Dimensions: 293'10" overall x 27' x 9'5"

Machinery: Direct-drive turbines, 3 screws, 12,000 hp, 29.5 knots.

Complement: 6 officers, 82 men

Armament: 3 3"/50, 1 1-pdr.

Design & Service

A total of thirty-one Navy destroyers were lent to the Coast Guard for enforcing Prohibition. Adapting these vessels to service was thought to be less costly than building new ships. In the end the rehabilitation of the vessels became a saga in itself because of the exceedingly poor condition of many of these war-weary ships. In many instances it took nearly a year to bring the vessels up to seaworthiness. Additionally, these were by far the largest and most sophisticated

vessels ever operated by the service and trained personnel were nearly nonexistent. As a result, Congress authorized hundreds of new enlistees. It was these inexperienced men that generally made up the destroyer crews.

USCGD *Paulding* was one of the pre-World War I 742-ton "flivvers". All were capable of over 25 knots, an advantage in the rum-chasing business. They, however, were easily outmaneuvered by smaller vessels. The destroyers' mission, therefore, was to picket the larger supply ships ("mother ships") and prevent them from off-loading their cargo onto the smaller, speedier contact boats that ran the liquor into shore. *Paulding* was among the first group of destroyers loaned to the Coast Guard. The vessel was stationed at Boston.

This vessel was sent to find CG-238 during a gale in February 1927 off Cape Cod. The 75-footer had already foundered and *Paulding* spent two days in the storm, losing much of her topside equipment, including one of her four stacks. On 17 December 1927 she accidentally rammed and sank the submarine S-4 while the latter was surfacing. S-4 sank and her entire crew was lost. An inquiry absolved the Coast Guard of blame.

Operational Highlights

24 Apr 1924 Transferred to Coast Guard from US Navy at Philadelphia Navy Yard.

23 Jan 1925 Commissioned at Hoboken, NJ.

22 May 1926 Ordered to permanent duty station at Boston.

15 Jul 1926 Arrived in Boston.

Feb 1927 Sent out during a gale to rescue CG-238. Spent two days in the storm and suffered much topside damage.

17 Dec 1927 Rammed and sank S-4 off West End Coast Guard Station. Hull was damaged. [See narrative above]

22 Dec 1927 Arrived in Boston Navy Yard for repairs.

10 Mar 1928 Resumed operations.

18 Aug 1930 Ordered towed to Philadelphia Navy Yard.

18 Oct 1930 Returned to the Navy.

